

No, Barron Trump Is Not Belting Out Tunes on YouTube

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Barron Trump waves to supporters as he departs an election night event for Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump at the Palm Beach Convention Center in West Palm Beach, Fla., on Nov. 06, 2024. Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images



By Susan D. Harris

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Commentary

One of the most disturbing deepfakes I've run across lately is Barron Trump singing on YouTube. The channel "MAGA Songs" posts generative AI videos of Donald Trump's youngest son, Barron, singing everything from the Star-Spangled Banner to AI generated lyrics like "My Father's Work is Never Done."

On one level it's disturbing because Barron Trump has rarely been heard speaking in public, let alone singing. In fact, the internet went crazy a few weeks ago when the docuseries "[Art of the Surge](#)," released a promotional video in which Barron Trump could be heard greeting people on election night. The viral video inspired headlines proclaiming "[Barron Trump speaks](#)."

With that in mind, it's hard to think that anyone really believes the safeguarded 18-year-old has suddenly decided to start belting out tunes and posting them on YouTube.

It's disturbing on another level because many of the theologically themed videos show the youngest Trump singing lyrics like "[I love Jesus, he's my guide](#)." Comments beneath the videos clearly show people of faith being misled as they respond with remarks such as: "Anyone who can so openly declare the precious name of Jesus has my vote!"

And finally, the videos are disquieting because Barron Trump has never publicly discussed his faith.

When I first discovered the channel, there was no indication that the videos were AI. Recently, however, the titles have been amended with clarifying statements like "Imagining Barron Trump Singing." They are also tagged with YouTube's relatively new "[Altered Content](#)" disclaimer which looks like this under the video:

How this content was made

Altered or synthetic content

Sound or visuals were significantly edited or digitally generated. [Learn more](#)

However, there are two problems with this disclaimer. Firstly, it's dependent on the YouTube creator to fill it out honestly and accurately. Secondly, it's dependent on the consumer to expand and read the video description—which most folks don't do. While there aren't any hard statistics on how many people actually read a video's description, [discussion threads](#) point to the fact that comments under videos believe the fact that few people are doing so.

And let's face it, YouTube's track record over the last few years has been less than stellar. [As I wrote in 2023](#): "Accusations of YouTube 'censorship' have been rampant for quite a while: from issues related to the [Jan. 6 Committee](#) and [Covid vaccines](#) to [climate change](#)."

Additionally, rallies held by President-elect Donald Trump weren't allowed on YouTube for years, reportedly because he [questioned the results](#) of the 2020 election. That ticked off a lot folks. It's a huge credit to our democracy that the American people found a way to circumvent YouTube's dictates—hundreds of thousands turned out at Trump rallies across the country and even more tuned in via [Rumble](#) and other platforms.

It should, therefore, come as no surprise that YouTube consumers already have a trust problem with the platform, and the onslaught of confusion and frustration generated by AI content is only making things worse.

Don't get me wrong, I know that AI is responsible for the machine learning algorithms that recommend the YouTube videos I want to see the most. It gulps down my viewer history and devours my likes, dislikes and watch times in order to vomit out exactly what I yearn for: The latest news in the Middle East, the migrating habits of the snowy owl, and the requisite talking animal videos. As a matter of fact, the algorithms are evolving so rapidly I literally can't open YouTube without being uncontrollably sucked in like a junkie to a trap house.

But it's the dark side of AI in YouTube video's that's causing the problems. [Scam videos](#) that used deepfake technology showcasing Joe Rogan and Taylor Swift endorsing Medicare scams were bad enough,

but what about politicians, news anchors, or CEOs making false statements? Or celebrities giving fake endorsements? The possibilities are limitless, and YouTube, like other social media, is still in the early stages of establishing ground rules.

In December, it was announced that the Creative Artists Agency in Los Angeles would be partnering with YouTube to help celebrities “fight back against AI-generated fakes.” Described as an “early-stage likeness management technology,” the purpose is to give celebrities the option to submit requests to remove the content once it’s found.

Another troubling aspect is that AI-generated videos can be monetized. Consider the fact that the most popular video of “Barron Trump Sings” has only been up for one month and it’s got 1.7 million views.

There’s also a burgeoning field of monetized, “faceless” YouTube channels, many of which are completely AI-generated. Some of the best examples of faceless channels with millions of views that seem to rely heavily on AI include [Kurzgesagt](#) and [LEMMiNO](#).

And perhaps predictably, there’s a growing [field of instructional videos](#) on how to make money generating faceless AI videos.

As one YouTuber put it, “[AI content is ruining YouTube](#).” Not only is the quality of videos going downhill, but search results are being affected as well—a problem YouTube hasn’t even begun to address.

Until technology catches up with technology, users of social media platforms like YouTube will continue to be flung into a veritable [house of mirrors](#)—where reality wrestles with its own reflection, and Barron Trump releases a new song every week.

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Susan D. Harris

Author

Susan D. Harris is a conservative opinion writer and journalist. Her website is SusanDHarris.com

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